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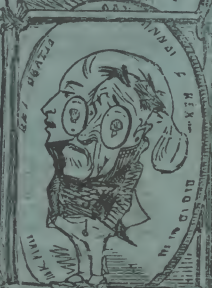
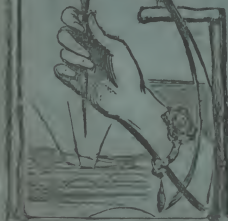
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It has been the annual custom of HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON to rally around him, on the 18th of June, the distinguished officers who were his brothers in arms, to celebrate the glorious victory in 1815, when they aided to crush a revolutionary and military tyranny that had long subdued all Europe, except our own happy land, which, under Providence, was saved by these heroes, who defeated an army and a general, the bravest and the best, except those who conquered them.

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
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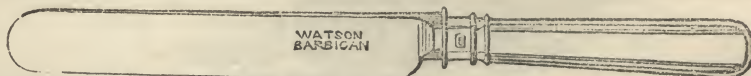
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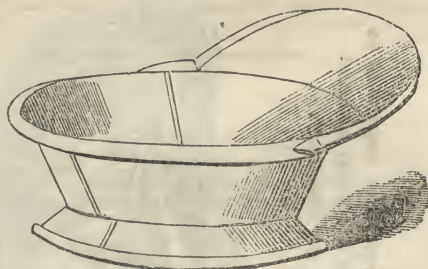
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Footman's Suit of Liveries, £3 3. Scarlet Hunting Coat, £3 3

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"LA SYLPHIDE" PARASOL.

BY
HER MAJESTY'S

ROYAL LETTERS
PATENT.



W. & J. SANGSTER

Beg respectfully to inform the Public, that they have obtained
Her Majesty's Letters Patent for a New

PARASOL,

CALLED

"LA SYLPHIDE,"

WHICH MAY BE CLOSED INSTANTANEOUSLY, WITHOUT MOVING EITHER HAND.

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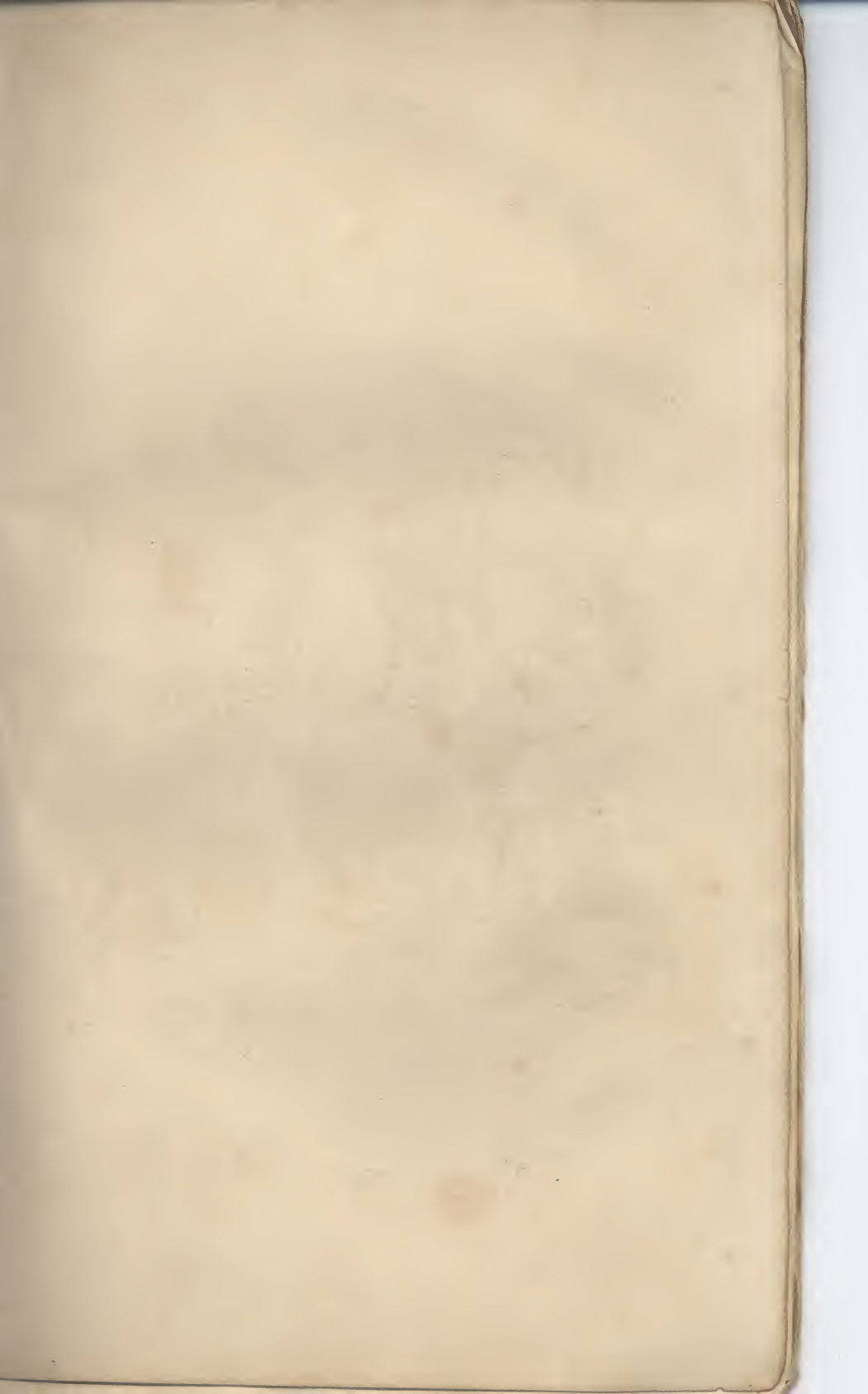
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Mrs. Gamp's proposal to toast





Mr. Pinch is amazed by an unexpected opposition.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

BEARS TIDINGS OF MARTIN, AND OF MARK, AS WELL AS OF A THIRD PERSON NOT QUITE UNKNOWN TO THE READER. EXHIBITS FILIAL PIETY IN AN UGLY ASPECT ; AND CASTS A DOUBTFUL RAY OF LIGHT UPON A VERY DARK PLACE.

TOM PINCH and Ruth were sitting at their early breakfast, with the window open, and a row of the freshest little plants arranged before it on the inside, by Ruth's own hands ; and Ruth had fastened a sprig of geranium in Tom's button-hole, to make him very smart and summer-like for the day (it was obliged to be fastened in, or that dear old Tom was certain to lose it) ; and people were crying flowers up and down the street ; and a blundering bee, who had got himself in between the two sashes of the window, was bruising his head against the glass, endeavouring to force himself out into the fine morning, and considering himself enchanted because he couldn't do it ; and the morning was as fine a morning as ever was seen ; and the fragrant air was kissing Ruth and rustling about Tom, as if it said, "How are you, my dears : I came all this way on purpose to salute you ;" and it was one of those glad times when we form, or ought to form, the wish that every one on earth were able to be happy, and catching glimpses of the summer of the heart, to feel the beauty of the summer of the year.

It was even a pleasanter breakfast than usual ; and it was always a pleasant one. For little Ruth had now two pupils to attend, each three times a week, and each two hours at a time ; and besides this, she had painted some screens and card-racks, and, unknown to Tom (was there ever anything so delightful !) had walked into a certain shop which dealt in such articles, after often peeping through the window ; and had taken courage to ask the mistress of that shop whether she would buy them. And the mistress had not only bought them, but had ordered more ; and that very morning Ruth had made confession of these facts to Tom, and had handed him the money in a little purse she had worked expressly for the purpose. They had been in a flutter about this, and perhaps had shed a happy tear or two for anything the history knows to the contrary ; but it was all over now ; and a brighter face than Tom's, or a brighter face than Ruth's, the bright sun had not looked on since he went to bed last night.

"My dear girl," said Tom, coming so abruptly on the subject, that he interrupted himself in the act of cutting a slice of bread, and left the knife sticking in the loaf, "what a queer fellow our landlord is ! I don't believe he has been home once, since he got me into that unsatisfactory scrape. I begin to think he will never come home again. What a mysterious life that man does lead, to be sure !"

"Very strange. Is it not, Tom !"

"Really," said Tom, "I hope it is only strange. I hope there may be nothing wrong in it. Sometimes I begin to be doubtful of that. I

must have an explanation with him," said Tom, shaking his head as if this were a most tremendous threat, "when I can catch him!"

A short double knock at the door put Tom's menacing looks to flight, and awakened an expression of surprise instead.

"Heyday!" said Tom. "An early hour for visitors! It must be John, I suppose."

"I—I—don't think it was his knock, Tom," observed his little sister.

"No?" said Tom. "It surely can't be my employer, suddenly arrived in town; directed here by Mr. Fips; and come for the key of the office. It's somebody inquiring for me, I declare! Come in, if you please!"

But when the person came in, Tom Pinch, instead of saying "Did you wish to speak with me, sir?" or "My name is Pinch, sir; what is your business, may I ask?" or addressing him in any such distant terms; cried out, "Good gracious Heaven!" and seized him by both hands, with the liveliest manifestations of astonishment and pleasure.

The visitor was not less moved than Tom himself, and they shook hands a great many times, without another word being spoken on either side. Tom was the first to find his voice.

"Mark Tapley, too!" said Tom, running towards the door, and shaking hands with somebody else. "My dear Mark, come in. How are you, Mark? He don't look a day older than he used to do, at the Dragon. How *are* you, Mark!"

"Uncommon jolly, sir, thank'ee," returned Mr. Tapley, all smiles and bows. "I hope I see you well, sir."

"Good gracious me!" cried Tom, patting him tenderly on the back. "How delightful it is to hear his old voice again! My dear Martin, sit down. My sister, Martin. Mr. Chuzzlewit, my love. Mark Tapley from the Dragon, my dear. Good gracious me, what a surprise this is! Sit down. Lord bless me!"

Tom was in such a state of excitement that he couldn't keep himself still for a moment, but was constantly running between Mark and Martin, shaking hands with them alternately, and presenting them over and over again to his sister.

"I remember the day we parted, Martin, as well as if it were yesterday," said Tom. "What a day it was! and what a passion you were in! And don't you remember my overtaking you in the road that morning, Mark, when I was going to Salisbury in the gig to fetch him, and you were looking out for a situation? And don't you recollect the dinner we had at Salisbury, Martin, with John Westlock, eh? Good gracious me! Ruth, my dear, Mr. Chuzzlewit. Mark Tapley, my love, from the Dragon. More cups and saucers, if you please. Bless my soul, how glad I am to see you both!"

And then Tom (as John Westlock had done on his arrival) ran off to the loaf to cut some bread and butter for them; and before he had spread a single slice, remembered something else, and came running back again to tell it; and then he shook hands with them again; and then he introduced his sister again; and then he did everything he had done already all over again; and nothing Tom could do, and nothing Tom could say, was half sufficient to express his joy at their safe return.

Mr. Tapley was the first to resume his composure: In a very short space of time, he was discovered to have somehow installed himself in office as waiter, or attendant upon the party; a fact which was first suggested to them by his temporary absence in the kitchen, and speedy return with a kettle of boiling water, from which he replenished the tea-pot with a self-possession that was quite his own.

"Sit down, and take your breakfast, Mark," said Tom. "Make him sit down and take his breakfast, Martin."

"Oh! I gave him up, long ago, as incorrigible," Martin replied. "He takes his own way, Tom. You would excuse him, Miss Pinch, if you knew his value."

"She knows it, bless you!" said Tom. "I have told her all about Mark Tapley. Have I not, Ruth?"

"Yes, Tom."

"Not all," returned Martin, in a low voice. "The best of Mark Tapley is only known to one man, Tom; and but for Mark he would hardly be alive to tell it."

"Mark!" said Tom Pinch, energetically: "If you don't sit down this minute, I'll swear at you!"

"Well, sir," returned Mr. Tapley, "sooner than you should do that, I'll comply. It's a considerable invasion of a man's jollity to be made so partickler welcome, but a Werb is a word as signifies to be, to do, or to suffer (which is all the grammar, and enough too, as ever I wos taught); and if there's a Werb alive, I'm it. For I'm always a bein', sometimes a doin', and continually a sufferin'."

"Not jolly yet?" asked Tom, with a smile.

"Why, I was rather so, over the water, sir," returned Mr. Tapley; "and not entirely without credit. But Human Natur' is in a conspiracy again' me; I can't get on. I shall have to leave it in my will, sir, to be wrote upon my tomb: 'He was a man as might have come out strong if he could have got a chance. But it was denied him.'"

Mr. Tapley took this occasion of looking about him with a grin, and subsequently attacking the breakfast, with an appetite not at all expressive of blighted hopes, or insurmountable despondency.

In the meanwhile, Martin drew his chair a little nearer to Tom and his sister, and related to them what had passed at Mr. Pecksniff's house; adding in few words a general summary of the distresses and disappointments he had undergone since he left England.

"For your faithful stewardship in the trust I left with you, Tom," he said, "and for all your goodness and disinterestedness, I can never thank you enough. When I add Mary's thanks to mine——"

Ah, Tom! The blood retreated from his cheeks, and came rushing back, so violently, that it was pain to feel it; ease though, ease to the aching of his wounded heart.

"When I add Mary's thanks to mine," said Martin, "I have made the only poor acknowledgment it is in our power to offer; but if you knew how much we feel, Tom, you would set some store by it, I am sure."

And if they had known how much Tom felt—but that no human

creature ever knew—they would have set some store by him. Indeed they would.

Tom changed the topic of discourse. He was sorry he could not pursue it, as it gave Martin pleasure ; but he was unable, at that moment. No drop of envy or bitterness was in his soul ; but he could not master the firm utterance of her name.

He inquired what Martin's projects were.

"No longer to make your fortune, Tom," said Martin, "but to try to live. I tried that once in London, Tom ; and failed. If you will give me the benefit of your advice and friendly counsel, I may succeed better under your guidance ; I will do anything, Tom ; anything ; to gain a livelihood by my own exertions. My hopes do not soar above that, now."

High-hearted, noble Tom ! Sorry to find the pride of his old companion humbled, and to hear him speaking in this altered strain ; at once, at once, he drove from his breast the inability to contend with its deep emotions, and spoke out bravely.

"Your hopes do not soar above that !" cried Tom. "Yes they do. How can you talk so ! They soar up to the time when you will be happy with her, Martin. They soar up to the time when you will be able to claim her, Martin. They soar up to the time when you will not be able to believe that you were ever cast down in spirit, or poor in pocket, Martin. Advice and friendly counsel ! Why, of course. But you shall have better advice and counsel (though you cannot have more friendly) than mine. You shall consult John Westlock. We'll go there immediately. It is yet so early, that I shall have time to take you to his chambers before I go to business ; they are in my way ; and I can leave you there, to talk over your affairs with him. So come along. Come along. I am a man of occupation now, you know," said Tom, with his pleasantest smile ; "and have no time to lose. Your hopes don't soar higher than that ? I dare say they don't. I know you, pretty well. They'll be soaring out of sight soon, Martin, and leaving all the rest of us leagues behind."

"Ay ! But I may be a little changed," said Martin, "since you knew me pretty well, Tom."

"What nonsense !" exclaimed Tom. "Why should you be changed ? You talk as if you were an old man. I never heard such a fellow ! Come to John Westlock's, come. Come along, Mark Tapley. It's Mark's doing, I have no doubt ; and it serves you right for having such a grumbler for your companion."

"There's no credit to be got through being jolly with *you*, Mr. Pinch, anyways," said Mark, with his face all wrinkled up with grins. "A parish doctor might be jolly with you. There's nothing short of goin' to the U-nited States for a second trip, as would make it at all creditable to be jolly, arter seein' you again !"

Tom laughed, and taking leave of his sister, hurried Mark and Martin out into the street, and away to John Westlock's by the nearest road ; for his hour of business was very near at hand, and he prided himself on always being exact to his time.

John Westlock was at home, but, strange to say, was rather embar-

rassed to see them ; and when Tom was about to go into the room where he was breakfasting, said he had a stranger there. It appeared to be a mysterious stranger, for John shut that door as he said it, and led them into the next room.

He was very much delighted, though, to see Mark Tapley ; and received Martin with his own frank courtesy. But Martin felt that he did not inspire John Westlock with any unusual interest ; and twice or thrice observed that he looked at Tom Pinch doubtfully ; not to say compassionately. He thought, and blushed to think, that he knew the cause of this.

"I apprehend you are engaged," said Martin, when Tom had announced the purport of their visit. "If you will allow me to come again at your own time, I shall be glad to do so."

"*I am engaged*," replied John, with some reluctance ; "but the matter on which I am engaged is one, to say the truth, more immediately demanding your knowledge than mine."

"Indeed !" cried Martin.

"It relates to a member of your family, and is of a serious nature. If you will have the kindness to remain here, it will be a satisfaction to me to have it privately communicated to you, in order that you may judge of its importance for yourself."

"And in the meantime," said Tom, "I must really take myself off, without any further ceremony."

"Is your business so very particular," asked Martin, "that you cannot remain with us for half an hour ? I wish you could. What *is* your business, Tom ?"

It was Tom's turn to be embarrassed, now : but he plainly said, after a little hesitation :

"Why, I am not at liberty to say what it is, Martin : though I hope soon to be in a condition to do so, and am aware of no other reason to prevent my doing so now, than the request of my employer. It's an awkward position to be placed in," said Tom, with an uneasy sense of seeming to doubt his friend, "as I feel every day ; but I really cannot help it, can I, John ?"

John Westlock replied in the negative ; and Martin, expressing himself perfectly satisfied, begged them not to say another word : though he could not help wondering very much, what curious office Tom held, and why he was so secret, and embarrassed, and unlike himself, in reference to it. Nor could he help reverting to it, in his own mind, several times after Tom went away, which he did as soon as this conversation was ended ; taking Mr. Tapley with him, who, as he laughingly said, might accompany him as far as Fleet-street, without injury.

"And what *you* mean to do, Mark ?" asked Tom, as they walked on together.

"Mean to do, sir ?" returned Mr. Tapley.

"Ay. What course of life do you mean to pursue ?"

"Well, sir," said Mr. Tapley. "The fact is, that I have been a-thinking rather, of the matrimonial line, sir."

"You don't say so, Mark !" cried Tom.

"Yes, sir. I've been a-turnin' of it over."

"And who is the lady, Mark?"

"The which, sir?" said Mr. Tapley.

"The lady. Come! You know what I said," replied Tom, laughing, "as well as I do!"

Mr. Tapley suppressed his own inclination to laugh; and, with one of his most whimsically-twisted looks, replied,

"You couldn't guess I suppose, Mr. Pinch?"

"How is it possible?" said Tom. "I don't know any of your flames, Mark. Except Mrs. Lupin, indeed."

"Well, sir!" retorted Mr. Tapley. "And supposing it was her!"

Tom stopping in the street to look at him, Mr. Tapley for a moment presented to his view, an utterly stolid and expressionless face: a perfect dead wall of countenance. But opening window after window in it, with astonishing rapidity, and lighting them all up as for a general illumination, he repeated:

"Supposin', for the sake of argument, as it was her, sir!"

"Why, I thought such a connexion wouldn't suit you, Mark, on any terms!" cried Tom.

"Well sir, I used to think so myself, once," said Mark. "But I an't so clear about it now. A dear, sweet creetur, sir!"

"A dear, sweet creature? To be sure she is," cried Tom. "But she always was a dear sweet creature, was she not?"

"Was she not!" assented Mr. Tapley.

"Then why on earth didn't you marry her at first, Mark, instead of wandering abroad: and losing all this time, and leaving her alone by herself: liable to be courted by other people?"

"Why, sir," retorted Mr. Tapley, in a spirit of unbounded confidence, "I'll tell you how it come about. You know me, Mr. Pinch, sir; there an't a gentleman alive as knows me better. You're acquainted with my constitution, and you're acquainted with my weakness. My constitution is, to be jolly; and my weakness is, to wish to find a credit in it. Wery good, sir. In this state of mind, I gets a notion in my head that she looks on me with a eye of—with what you may call a favourable sort of eye in fact," said Mr. Tapley, with modest hesitation.

"No doubt," replied Tom. "We knew that perfectly well when we spoke on this subject long ago; before you left the Dragon."

Mr. Tapley nodded assent. "Well sir! But bein' at that time full of hopeful wisions, I arrives at the con-clusion that no credit is to be got out of such a way of life as that, where everything agreeable would be ready to one's hand. Lookin' on the bright side of human life in short, one of my hopeful wisions is, that there's a deal of misery a-waitin' for me; in the midst of which I may come out tolerable strong, and be jolly under circumstances as reflects some credit. I goes into the world sir, wery boyant, and I tries this. I goes aboard ship first, and wery soon discovers (by the ease with which I'm jolly, mind you) as there's no credit to be got *there*. I might have took warning by this, and gave it up; but I didn't. I gets to the U-nited States; and then I *do* begin, I won't deny it, to feel some little credit in sustaining my spirits. What

follows? Jest as I'm beginning to come out, and am a treadin' on the verge, my master deceives me."

"Deceives you!" cried Tom.

"Swindles me," retorted Mr. Tapley, with a beaming face. "Turns his back on ev'ry thing as made his service a creditable one, and leaves me, high and dry, without a leg to stand upon. In which state, I returns home. Wery good. Then all my hopeful wisions bein' crushed; and findin' that there an't no credit for me nowhere; I abandons myself to despair, and says, 'Let me do that as has the least credit in it, of all; marry a dear, sweet creetur, as is wery fond of me: me being, at the same time, wery fond of her: lead a happy life; and struggle no more again' the blight which settles on my prospects.'"

"If your philosophy, Mark," said Tom, who laughed heartily at this speech, "be the oddest I ever heard of, it is not the least wise. Mrs. Lupin has said 'yes,' of course?"

"Why, no, sir," replied Mr. Tapley; "she hasn't gone so far as that yet. Which I attribute principally to my not havin' asked her. But we was wery agreeable together—comfortable, I may say—the night I come home. It's all right, sir."

"Well!" said Tom, stopping at the Temple Gate. "I wish you joy, Mark, with all my heart. I shall see you again to-day, I dare say. Good-bye for the present."

"Good-bye, sir! Good-bye, Mr. Pinch," he added, by way of soliloquy, as he stood looking after him. "Although you *are* a damper to a honorable ambition. You little think it, but you was the first to dash my hopes. Pecksniff would have built me up for life, but your sweet temper pulled me down. Good-bye Mr. Pinch!"

While these confidences were interchanged between Tom Pinch and Mark, Martin and John Westlock were very differently engaged. They were no sooner left alone together than Martin said, with an effort he could not disguise:

"Mr. Westlock, we have met only once before, but you have known Tom a long while, and that seems to render you familiar to me. I cannot talk freely with you on any subject unless I relieve my mind of what oppresses it just now. I see with pain that you so far mistrust me that you think me likely to impose on Tom's regardlessness of himself, or on his kind nature, or some of his good qualities."

"I had no intention," replied John, "of conveying any such impression to you, and am exceedingly sorry to have done so."

"But you entertain it?" said Martin.

"You ask me so pointedly and directly," returned the other, "that I cannot deny the having accustomed myself to regard you as one who, not in wantonness but in mere thoughtlessness of character, did not sufficiently consider his nature and did not quite treat it as it deserves to be treated. It is much easier to slight than to appreciate Tom Pinch."

This was not said warmly, but was energetically spoken too; for there was no subject in the world (but one) on which the speaker felt so strongly.

"I grew into the knowledge of Tom," he pursued, "as I grew

towards manhood; and I have learned to love him as something infinitely better than myself. I did not think that you understood him when we met before. I did not think that you greatly cared to understand him. The instances of this which I observed in you, were, like my opportunities for observation, very trivial; and were very harmless I dare say. But they were not agreeable to me, and they forced themselves upon me; for I was not upon the watch for them, believe me. You will say," added John, with a smile, as he subsided into more of his accustomed manner, "that I am not by any means agreeable to you. I can only assure you, in reply, that I would not have originated this topic on any account."

"I originated it," said Martin; "and so far from having any complaint to make against you, highly esteem the friendship you entertain for Tom, and the very many proofs you have given him of it. Why should I endeavour to conceal from you?" he coloured deeply though: "that I neither understood him nor cared to understand him when I was his companion; and that I am very truly sorry for it now!"

It was so sincerely said, at once so modestly and manfully, that John offered him his hand as if he had not done so before; and Martin giving his in the same open spirit, all constraint between the young men vanished.

"Now pray," said John, when I tire your patience very much in what I am going to say, recollect that it has an end to it, and that the end is the point of the story."

With this preface, he related all the circumstances connected with his having presided over the illness and slow recovery of the patient at the Bull; and tacked on to the skirts of that narrative Tom's own account of the business on the wharf. Martin was not a little puzzled when he came to an end, for the two stories seemed to have no connexion with each other, and to leave him, as the phrase is, all abroad.

"If you will excuse me for one moment," said John, rising, "I will beg you almost immediately to come into the next room."

Upon that, he left Martin to himself, in a state of considerable astonishment; and soon came back again to fulfil his promise. Accompanying him into the next room, Martin found there a third person; no doubt the stranger of whom his host had spoken when Tom Pinch introduced him.

He was a young man; with deep black hair and eyes. He was gaunt and pale; and evidently had not long recovered from a severe illness. He stood as Martin entered, but sat again at John's desire. His eyes were cast downward; and but for one glance at them both, half in humiliation and half in entreaty, he kept them so, and sat quite still and silent.

"This person's name is Lewsome," said John Westlock, "whom I have mentioned to you as having been seized with illness at the inn near here, and undergone so much. He has had a very hard time of it, ever since he began to recover; but as you see he is now doing well."

As he did not move or speak, and John Westlock made a pause, Martin, not knowing what to say, said that he was glad to hear it.

"The short statement that I wish you to hear from his own lips, Mr. Chuzzlewit," John pursued : looking attentively at him, and not at Martin : "he made to me for the first time yesterday, and repeated to me this morning, without the least variation of any essential particular. I have already told you that he informed me before he was removed from the Inn, that he had a secret to disclose to me which lay heavy on his mind. But fluctuating between sickness and health ; and between his desire to relieve himself of it, and his dread of involving himself by revealing it ; he has, until yesterday, avoided the disclosure. I never pressed him for it (having no idea of its weight or import, or of my right to do so), until within a few days past ; when understanding from him, on his own voluntary avowal, in a letter from the country, that it related to a person whose name was Jonas Chuzzlewit ; and thinking that it might throw some light on that little mystery which made Tom anxious now and then ; I urged the point upon him, and heard his statement as you will now, from his own lips. It is due to him to say, that in the apprehension of death, he committed it to writing sometime since, and folded it in a sealed paper, addressed to me ; which he could not resolve, however, to place of his own act in my hands. He has the paper in his breast, I believe, at this moment."

The young man touched it hastily ; in corroboration of the fact.

"It will be well to leave that in our charge, perhaps," said John.

"But do not mind it now."

As he said this, he held up his hand to bespeak Martin's attention. It was already fixed upon the man before him, who, after a short silence said, in a low, weak, hollow voice :

"What relation was Mr. Anthony Chuzzlewit, who—"

"—Who died—to me ?" said Martin. "He was my grandfather's brother."

"I fear he was made away with. Murdered !"

"My God !" said Martin. "By whom ?"

The young man, Lewsome, looked up in his face, and casting down his eyes again, replied :

"I fear, by me."

"By you ?" cried Martin.

"Not by my act, but I fear by my means."

"Speak out !" said Martin, "and speak the truth."

"I fear this *is* the truth."

Martin was about to interrupt him again, but John Westlock saying softly, "Let him tell his story in his own way," Lewsome went on thus :

"I have been bred a surgeon, and for the last few years have served a general practitioner in the city, as his assistant. While I was in his employment I became acquainted with Jonas Chuzzlewit. He is the principal in this deed."

"What do you mean ?" demanded Martin, sternly. "Do you know he is the son of the old man of whom you have spoken ?"

"I do," he answered.

He remained silent for some moments ; when he resumed at the point where he had left off.

"I have reason to know it ; for I have often heard him wish his old father dead, and complain of his being wearisome to him, and a drag upon him. He was in the habit of doing so, at a place of meeting we had : three or four of us : at night. There was no good in the place, you may suppose, when you hear that he was the chief of the party. I wish I had died myself, and never seen it !"

He stopped again ; and again resumed as before.

"We met to drink and game ; not for large sums, but for sums that were large to us. He generally won. Whether or no, he lent money at interest to those who lost ; and in this way, though I think we all secretly hated him, he came to be the master of us. To propitiate him, we made a jest of his father ; it began with his debtors ; I was one : and we used to toast a quicker journey to the old man, and a swift inheritance to the young one."

He paused again.

"One night he came there in a very bad humour. He had been greatly tried, he said, by the old man that day. He and I were alone together ; and he angrily told me, that the old man was in his second childhood ; that he was weak, imbecile, and drivelling ; as unbearable to himself as he was to other people ; and that it would be a charity to put him out of the way. He swore that he had often thought of mixing something with the stuff he took for his cough, which should help him to die easily. People were sometimes smothered who were bitten by mad dogs, he said ; and why not help these lingering old men out of their troubles too ? He looked full at me as he said so, and I looked full at him ; but it went no farther that night."

He stopped once more, and was silent for so long an interval, that John Westlock said "Go on." Martin had never removed his eyes from his face, but was so absorbed in horror and astonishment, that he could not speak.

"It may have been a week after that, or it may have been less, or more : the matter was in my mind all the time, but I cannot recollect the time, as I should any other period : when he spoke to me again. We were alone then, too ; being there before the usual hour of assembling. There was no appointment between us ; but I think I went there to meet him, and I know he came there to meet me. He was there first. He was reading a newspaper when I went in, and nodded to me without looking up, or leaving off reading. I sat down opposite and close to him. He said, immediately, that he wanted me to get him some of two sorts of drugs. One that was instantaneous in its effect ; of which he wanted very little. One that was slow, and not suspicious in appearance ; of which he wanted more. While he was speaking to me he still read the newspaper. He said 'Drugs,' and never used any other word. Neither did I."

"This all agrees with what I have heard before," observed John Westlock.

"I asked him what he wanted them for ? He said for no harm ; to physic cats ; what did it matter to me ? I was going out to a distant colony (I had recently got the appointment, which, as Mr. Westlock knows, I have since lost by my sickness, and which was my only hope

of salvation from ruin), and what did it matter to me? He could get them without my aid at half a hundred places, but not so easily as he could get them of me. This was true. He might not want them at all, he said, and he had no present idea of using them; but he wished to have them by him. All this time he still read the newspaper. We talked about the price. He was to forgive me a small debt—I was quite in his power—and to pay me five pounds; and there the matter dropped, through others coming in. But next night, under exactly similar circumstances, I gave him the drugs, on his saying I was a fool to think that he should ever use them for any harm; and he gave me the money. We have never met since. I only know that the poor old father died soon afterwards: just as he would have died from this cause: and that I have undergone, and suffer now, intolerable misery. "Nothing," he added, stretching out his hands, "can paint my misery! It is well deserved, but nothing can paint it."

With that he hung his head, and said no more. Wasted and wretched, he was not a creature upon whom to heap reproaches that were unavailing.

"Let him remain at hand," said Martin, turning from him; "but out of sight, in Heaven's name!"

"He will remain here," John whispered. "Come with me!" Softly turning the key upon him as they went out, he conducted Martin into the adjoining room, in which they had been before.

Martin was so amazed, so shocked, and confounded by what he had heard, that it was some time before he could reduce it to any order in his mind, or could sufficiently comprehend the bearing of one part upon another, to take in all the details at one view. When he at length had the whole narrative clearly before him, John Westlock went on to point out the great probability of the guilt of Jonas being known to other people, who traded in it for their own benefit, and who were by such means able to exert that control over him which Tom Pinch had accidentally witnessed, and unconsciously assisted. This appeared so plain, that they agreed upon it without difficulty; but instead of deriving the least assistance from this source, they found that it embarrassed them the more.

They knew nothing of the real parties, who possessed this power. The only person before them was Tom's landlord. They had no right to question Tom's landlord, even if they could find him, which, according to Tom's account, it would not be easy to do. And granting that they did question him, and he answered (which was taking a good deal for granted), he had only to say, with reference to the adventure on the wharf, that he had been sent from such and such a place to summon Jonas back on urgent business, and there was an end of it.

Besides, there was the great difficulty and responsibility of moving at all in the matter. Lewsome's story might be false; in his wretched state it might be greatly heightened by a diseased brain; or admitting it to be entirely true, the old man might have died a natural death. Mr. Pecksniff had been there at the time; as Tom immediately remembered, when he came back in the afternoon, and shared their counsels; and

there had been no secrecy about it. Martin's grandfather was of right the person to decide upon the course that should be taken ; but to get at his views would be impossible, for Mr. Pecksniff's views were certain to be his. And the nature of Mr. Pecksniff's views in reference to his own son-in-law, might be easily reckoned upon.

Apart from these considerations, Martin could not endure the thought of seeming to grasp at this unnatural charge against his relative, and using it as a stepping-stone to his grandfather's favour. But that he would seem to do so, if he presented himself before his grandfather in Mr. Pecksniff's house again, for the purpose of declaring it ; and that Mr. Pecksniff, of all men, would represent his conduct in that despicable light ; he perfectly well knew. On the other hand, to be in possession of such a statement, and to take no measures of further inquiry in reference to it, was tantamount to being a partner in the guilt it professed to disclose.

In a word, they were wholly unable to discover any outlet from this maze of difficulty, which did not lie through some perplexed and entangled thicket. And although Mr. Tapley was promptly taken into their confidence ; and the fertile imagination of that gentleman suggested many bold expedients, which, to do him justice, he was quite ready to carry into instant operation on his own personal responsibility ; still, 'bating the general zeal of Mr. Tapley's nature, nothing was made particularly clearer by these offers of service.

It was in this position of affairs that Tom's account of the strange behaviour of the decayed clerk, upon the night of the tea-party, became of great moment, and finally convinced them that to arrive at a more accurate knowledge of the workings of that old man's mind and memory, would be to take a most important stride in their pursuit of the truth. So, having first satisfied themselves that no communication had ever taken place between Lewsome and Mr. Chuffey (which would have accounted at once for any suspicions the latter might entertain), they unanimously resolved that the old clerk was the man they wanted.

But like the unanimous resolution of a public meeting ; which will oftentimes declare that this or that grievance is not to be borne a moment longer, which is nevertheless borne for a century or two afterwards, without any modification ; they only reached in this the conclusion that they were all of one mind. For it was one thing to want Mr. Chuffey, and another thing to get at him ; and to do that without alarming him, or without alarming Jonas, or without being discomfited by the difficulty of striking, in an instrument so out of tune and so unused, the note they sought, was an end as far from their reach as ever.

The question then became, who of those about the old clerk had had most influence with him, that night ? Tom said his young mistress clearly. But Tom and all of them shrunk from the thought of entrapping her, and making her the innocent means of bringing retribution on her cruel husband. Was there nobody else ? Why yes. In a very different way, Tom said, he was influenced by Mrs. Gamp, the nurse : who had once had the controul of him as he understood, for some time.

They caught at this immediately. Here was a new way out, developed in a quarter until then overlooked. John Westlock knew Mrs. Gamp; he had given her employment; he was acquainted with her place of residence: for that good lady had obligingly furnished him, at parting, with a pack of her professional cards for general distribution. It was decided that Mrs. Gamp should be approached with caution, but approached without delay; and that the depths of that discreet matron's knowledge of Mr. Chuffey, and means of bringing them, or one of them, into communication with him, should be carefully sounded.

On this service, Martin and John Westlock determined to proceed that night; waiting on Mrs. Gamp first, at her lodgings; and taking their chance of finding her in the repose of private life, or of having to seek her out, elsewhere, in the exercise of her professional duties. Tom returned home, that he might lose no opportunity of having an interview with Nadgett, by being absent in the event of his re-appearance. And Mr. Tapley remained (by his own particular desire) for the time being in Furnival's Inn, to look after Lewsome; who might safely have been left to himself, however, for any thought he seemed to entertain of giving them the slip.

But before they parted on their several errands, they caused him to read aloud, in the presence of them all, the paper which he had about him, and the declaration he had attached to it, which was to the effect, that he had written it voluntarily, in the fear of death, and in the torture of his mind. And when he had done so, they all signed it, and taking it from him, of his free will, locked it in a place of safety.

Martin also wrote, by John's advice, a letter to the trustees of the famous Grammar School, boldly claiming the successful design as his, and charging Mr. Pecksniff with the fraud he had committed. In this proceeding also John was hotly interested: observing with his usual irreverence, that Mr. Pecksniff had been a successful rascal all his life through, and that it would be a lasting source of happiness to him (John) if he could help to do him justice in the smallest particular.

A busy day! But Martin had no lodgings yet; so when these matters were disposed of, he excused himself from dining with John Westlock and was fain to wander out alone, and look for some. He succeeded after great trouble, in engaging two garrets for himself and Mark, situated in a court in the Strand, not far from Temple Bar. Their luggage, which was waiting for them at a coach-office, he conveyed to this new place of refuge; and it was with a glow of satisfaction, which as a selfish man he never could have known and never had, that: thinking how much pains and trouble he had saved Mark, and how pleased and astonished Mark would be: he afterwards walked up and down, in the Temple, eating a meat-pie for his dinner.

CHAPTER XLIX.

IN WHICH MRS. HARRIS, ASSISTED BY A TEAPOT, IS THE CAUSE OF A
DIVISION BETWEEN FRIENDS.

MRS. GAMP's apartment in Kingsgate-street, High Holborn, wore, metaphorically speaking, a robe of state. It was swept and garnished for the reception of a visitor. That visitor was Betsey Prig : Mrs. Prig of Bartlemy's ; or as some said Barklemy's, or as some said Bardlemy's : for by all these endearing and familiar appellations, had the hospital of Saint Bartholomew become a household word among the sisterhood which Betsey Prig adorned.

Mrs. Gamp's apartment was not a spacious one, but, to a contented mind a closet is a palace ; and the first-floor front at Mr. Sweedlepipe's may have been, in the imagination of Mrs. Gamp, a stately pile. If it were not exactly that, to restless intellects, it at least comprised as much accommodation as any person, not sanguine to insanity, could have looked for, in a room of its dimensions. For only keep the bedstead always in your mind ; and you were safe. That was the grand secret. Remembering the bedstead, you might even stoop to look under the little round table for anything you had dropped, without hurting yourself much against the chest of drawers, or qualifying as a patient of Saint Bartholomew, by falling into the fire.

Visitors were much assisted in their cautious efforts to preserve an unflagging recollection of this piece of furniture, by its size : which was great. It was not a turn-up bedstead, nor yet a French bedstead, nor yet a four-post bedstead, but what is poetically called, a tent : the sack-ing whereof, was low and bulgy, insomuch that Mrs. Gamp's box would not go under it, but stopped half way, in a manner which while it did violence to the reason, likewise endangered the legs, of a stranger. The frame too, which would have supported the canopy and hangings if there had been any, was ornamented with divers pippins carved in timber, which on the slightest provocation and frequently on none at all, came tumbling down ; harrassing the peaceful guest with inexplicable terrors.

The bed itself was decorated with a patchwork quilt of great antiquity ; and at the upper end, upon the side nearest to the door, hung a scanty curtain of blue check, which prevented the Zephyrs that were abroad in Kingsgate-street from visiting Mrs. Gamp's head too roughly. Some rusty gowns and other articles of that lady's wardrobe depended from the posts ; and these had so adapted themselves by long usage to her figure, that more than one impatient husband coming in precipitately, at about the time of twilight, had been for an instant stricken dumb by the supposed discovery that Mrs. Gamp had hanged herself. One gentleman, coming on the usual hasty errand, had said indeed, that they looked like guardian angels "watching of her in her sleep." But that, as Mrs. Gamp said, "was his first ;" and he never repeated the sentiment though he often repeated his visit.

The chairs in Mrs. Gamp's apartment were extremely large and broad-backed, which was more than a sufficient reason for their being but two in number. They were both elbow-chairs, of ancient mahogany ; and were chiefly valuable for the slippery nature of their seats ; which had been originally horse-hair, but were now covered with a shiny substance of a blueish tint, from which the visitor began to slide away with a dismayed countenance, immediately after sitting down. What Mrs. Gamp wanted in chairs she made up in handboxes ; of which she had a great collection, devoted to the reception of various miscellaneous valuables, which were not, however, as well protected as the good woman, by a pleasant fiction, seemed to think : for though every handbox had a carefully closed lid, not one among them had a bottom ; owing to which cause, the property within was merely, as it were, extinguished. The chest of drawers having been originally made to stand upon the top of another chest, had a dwarfish, elfin look, alone ; but in regard of its security it had a great advantage over the handboxes, for as all the handles had been long ago pulled off, it was very difficult to get at its contents. This indeed was only to be done by one of two devices ; either by tilting the whole structure forward until all the drawers fell out together, or by opening them singly with knives : like oysters.

Mrs. Gamp stored all her household matters in a little cupboard by the fire-place ; beginning below the surface (as in nature) with the coals, and mounting gradually upwards to the spirits, which, from motives of delicacy, she kept in a tea-pot. The chimney-piece was ornamented with a small almanack, marked here and there in Mrs. Gamp's own hand, with a memorandum of the date at which some lady was expected to fall due. It was also embellished with three profiles : one, in colours, of Mrs. Gamp herself in early life ; one in bronze of a lady in feathers, supposed to be Mrs. Harris, as she appeared when dressed for a ball ; and one in black, of Mr. Gamp, deceased. The last was a full length, in order that the likeness might be rendered more obvious and forcible, by the introduction of the wooden leg.

A pair of bellows, a pair of pattens, a toasting-fork, a kettle, a pabot, a spoon for the administration of medicine to the refractory ; and lastly, Mrs. Gamp's umbrella, which as something of great price and rarity was displayed with particular ostentation ; completed the decorations of the chimney-piece and adjacent wall. Towards these objects, Mrs. Gamp raised her eyes in satisfaction when she had arranged the tea-board, and had concluded her arrangements for the reception of Betsey Prig, even unto the setting forth of two pounds of Newcastle salmon, intensely pickled.

"There ! Now drat you, Betsey, don't be long !" said Mrs. Gamp, apostrophising her absent friend. "For I can't abear to wait, I do assure you. To wotever place I goes, I sticks to this one mortar, 'I'm easy pleased ; it is but little as I wants ; but I must have that little of the best, and to the minit when the clock strikes, else we do not part as I could wish, but bearin' malice in our arts.'"

Her own preparations were of the best, for they comprehended a delicate new loaf, a plate of fresh butter, a basin of fine white sugar and

other arrangements on the same scale. Even the snuff with which she now refreshed herself, was so choice in quality, that she took a second pinch.

"There 's the little bell a ringing now," said Mrs. Gamp, hurrying to the stair-head and looking over. "Betsy Prig, my—why it's that there disapintin' Sweedlepipes, I do believe."

"Yes, it's me," said the barber, in a faint voice, "I've just come in."

"You're always a comin' in, I think," muttered Mrs. Gamp to herself, "except wen you're a-going out. I ha'n't no patience with that man!"

"Mrs. Gamp!" said the barber. I say! Mrs. Gamp!"

"Well!" cried Mrs. Gamp, impatiently, as she descended the stairs. "What is it? Is the Thames a-fire, and cooking its own fish, Mr. Sweedlepipes? Why wot's the man gone and been a-doin of to himself? He's as white as chalk!"

She added the latter clause of inquiry, when she got down stairs, and found him seated in the shaving-chair, pale and disconsolate.

"You recollect," said Poll. "You recollect young——"

"Not young Wilkins!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "Don't say young Wilkins, wotever you do. If young Wilkins's wife is took——"

"It isn't anybody's wife," exclaimed the little barber. "Bailey, Young Bailey!"

"Why, wot do you mean to say that chit's been a-doin of?" retorted Mrs. Gamp, sharply. "Stuff and nonsense, Mr. Sweedlepipes!"

"He hasn't been a doing anything!" exclaimed poor Poll, quite desperate. "What do you catch me up so short for, when you see me put out, to that extent, that I can hardly speak? He'll never do anything again. He's done for. He's killed. The first time I ever see that boy," said Poll, "I charged him too much for a redpoll. I asked him three-halfpence for a penny one, because I was afraid he'd beat me down. But he didn't. And now he's dead; and if you was to crowd all the steam-engines and electric fluids that ever was, into this shop, and set 'em every one to work their hardest, they couldn't square the account, though it's only a ha'penny!"

Mr. Sweedlepipe turned aside to the towel, and wiped his eyes with it.

"And what a clever boy he was!" he said. "What a surprising young chap he was! How he talked! and what a deal he know'd! Shaved in this very chair he was; only for fun; it was all his fun; he was full of it. Ah! to think that he'll never be shaved in earnest! The birds might every one have died, and welcome," cried the little barber, looking round him at the cages, and again applying to the towel, "sooner than I'd have heard this news!"

"How did you ever come to hear it?" said Mrs. Gamp. "Who told you?"

"I went out," returned the little barber, "into the city, to meet a sporting Gent upon the Stock Exchange, that wanted a few slow pigeons to practise at; and when I'd done with him, I went to get a little drop of beer, and there I heard everybody a-talking about it. It's in the papers.

"You are in a nice state of confugion, Mr. Sweedlepipes, you are!" said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her head; "and my opinion is, as half-a-dudgeon fresh young lively leeches on your temples, wouldn't be too much to clear your mind, which so I tell you. Wot were they a-talkin on, and wot was in the papers?"

"All about it!" cried the barber. "What else do you suppose? Him and his master were upset on a journey, and he was carried to Salisbury, and was breathing his last when the account came away. He never spoke afterwards. Not a single word. That's the worst of it to me; but that an't all. His master can't be found. The other manager of their office in the city: Crimple, David Crimple: has gone off with the money, and is advertised for, with a reward, upon the walls. Mr. Montague, poor young Bailey's master (what a boy he was!) is advertised for, too. Some say he's slipped off, to join his friend abroad; some say he mayn't have got away yet; and they're looking for him high and low. Their office is a smash; a swindle altogether. But what's a Life Insurance Office to a Life! And what a Life Young Bailey's was!"

"He was born into a wale," said Mrs. Gamp, with philosophical coolness; "and he lived in a wale; and he must take the consequences of sech a sitiuation. But don't you hear nothink of Mr. Chuzzlewit in all this?"

"No," said Poll, "nothing to speak of. His name wasn't printed as one of the board, though some people say it was just going to be. Some believe he was took in, and some believe he was one of the takers-in; but however that may be, they can't prove nothing against him. This morning he went up of his own accord afore the Lord Mayor or some of them city big-wigs, and complained that he'd been swindled, and that these two persons had gone off and cheated him, and that he had just found out that Montague's name wasn't even Montague, but something else. And they do say that he looked like Death, owing to his losses. But, Lord forgive me," cried the barber, coming back again to the subject of his individual grief, "what's his looks to me! He might have died and welcome, fifty times, and not been such a loss as Bailey!"

At this juncture the little bell rang, and the deep voice of Mrs. Prig struck into the conversation.

"Oh! You're a talkin about it, are you!" observed that lady.

"Well, I hope you've got it over, for I an't interested in it myself."

"My precious Betsey," said Mrs. Gamp, "how late you are!"

The worthy Mrs. Prig replied, with some asperity, "that if perwerse people went off dead, when they was least expected, it warn't no fault of her'n." And further, "that it was quite aggrawation enough to be made late when one was dropping for one's tea, without hearing on it again."

Mrs. Gamp, deriving from this exhibition of repartee some clue to the state of Mrs. Prig's feelings, instantly conducted her up stairs: deeming that the sight of pickled salmon might work a softening change.

But Betsey Prig expected pickled salmon. It was obvious that she did; for her first words, after glancing at the table, were:

"I know'd she wouldn't have a coucumber!"

Mrs. Gamp changed colour, and sat down upon the bedstead.

"Lord bless you, Betsey Prig, your words is true. I quite forgot it!"

Mrs. Prig, looking steadfastly at her friend, put her hand in her pocket, and, with an air of surly triumph, drew forth either the oldest of lettuces or youngest of cabbages, but at any rate, a green vegetable; of an expansive nature, and of such magnificent proportions that she was obliged to shut it up like an umbrella before she could pull it out. She also produced a handful of mustard and cress, a trifle of the herb called dandelion, three bunches of radishes, an onion rather larger than an average turnip, three substantial slices of beet root, and a short prong or antler of celery; the whole of this garden-stuff having been publicly exhibited but a short time before as a twopenny salad, and purchased by Mrs. Prig, on condition that the vendor could get it all into her pocket. Which had been happily accomplished, in High Holborn: to the breathless interest of a hackney-coach stand. And she laid so little stress on this surprising forethought, that she did not even smile, but returning her pocket into its accustomed sphere, merely recommended that these productions of nature should be sliced up, for immediate consumption, in plenty of vinegar.

"And don't go a dropping none of your snuff in it," said Mrs. Prig. "In gruel, barley-water, apple-tea, mutton-broth, and that, it don't signify. It stimulates a patient. But I don't relish it myself."

"Why, Betsey Prig!" cried Mrs. Gamp, "how *can* you talk so!"

"What, an't your patients, wotever their diseases is, always a sneezin' their wery heads off, along of your snuff!" said Mrs. Prig.

"And wot if they are!" said Mrs. Gamp.

"Nothing if they are," said Mrs. Prig. "But don't deny it, Sairah."

"Who deniges of it?" Mrs. Gamp inquired.

Mrs. Prig returned no answer.

"Who deniges of it, Betsey?" Mrs. Gamp inquired again. Then Mrs. Gamp, by reversing the question, imparted a deeper and more awful character of solemnity to the same. "Betsey, who deniges of it?"

It was the nearest possible approach to a very decided difference of opinion between these ladies; but Mrs. Prig's impatience for the meal being greater at the moment than her impatience of contradiction, she replied, for the present, "Nobody, if you don't, Sairah," and prepared herself for tea. For a quarrel can be taken up at any time, but a limited quantity of salmon can not.

Her toilet was simple. She had merely to "chuck" her bonnet and shawl upon the bed; give her hair two pulls, one upon the right side and one upon the left, as if she were ringing a couple of bells; and all was done. The tea was already made, Mrs. Gamp was not long over the salad, and they were soon at the height of their repast.

The temper of both parties was improved, for the time being, by the enjoyments of the table. When the meal came to a termination (which it was pretty long in doing), and Mrs. Gamp having cleared away, produced the tea-pot from the top shelf, simultaneously with a couple of wine-glasses, they were quite amiable.

"Betsey," said Mrs. Gamp, filling her own glass, and passing the tea-pot, "I will now propoge a toast. My frequent pardner, Betsey Prig!"

"Which, altering the name to Sairah Gamp; I drink," said Mrs. Prig, "with love and tenderness."

From this moment, symptoms of inflammation began to lurk in the nose of each lady; and perhaps, notwithstanding all appearances to the contrary, in the temper also.

"Now Sairah," said Mrs. Prig, "joining business with pleasure, wot is this case in which you wants me?"

Mrs. Gamp betraying in her face some intention of returning an evasive answer, Betsey added:

"Is it Mrs. Harris?"

"No, Betsey Prig, it an't," was Mrs. Gamp's reply.

"Well!" said Mrs. Prig, with a short laugh. "I'm glad of that, at any rate."

"Why should you be glad of that Betsey?" Mrs. Gamp retorted, warmly. "She is unbeknown to you except by hearsay, why should you be glad? If you have anythink to say contrary to the character of Mrs. Harris, which well I knows behind her back afore her face or anywheres is not to be impeaged, out with it, Betsey. I have know'd that sweetest and best of women," said Mrs. Gamp, shaking her head, and shedding tears, "ever since afore her First, which Mr. Harris who was dreadful timid went and stopped his ears in a empty dog-kennel, and never took his hands away or come out once till he was showed the baby, wen bein took with fits, the doctor collared him and laid him on his back upon the airy stones, and she was told to ease her mind, his owls was organs. And I have know'd her, Betsey Prig, wen he has hurt her feelin art by sayin of his Ninth that it was one too many, if not two, while that dear innocent was cooin in his face, which thrive it did though bandy, but I have never know'd as you had occagion to be glad, Betsey, on accounts of Mrs. Harris not requiring you. Require she never will, depend upon it, for her constant words in sickness is, and will be, 'Send for Sairey!'"

During this touching address, Mrs. Prig adroitly feigning to be the victim of that absence of mind which has its origin in excessive attention to one topic, helped herself from the tea-pot without appearing to observe it. Mrs. Gamp observed it, however, and came to a premature close in consequence.

"Well it an't her, it seems," said Mrs. Prig, coldly: "who is it, then?"

"You have heerd me mention, Betsey," Mrs. Gamp replied, after glancing in an expressive and marked manner at the tea-pot, "a person as I took care on at the time as you and me was pardners off and on, in that there fever at the Bull?"

"Old Snuffey," Mrs. Prig observed.

Sarah Gamp looked at her with an eye of fire, for she saw in this mistake of Mrs. Prig, another wilful and malignant stab at that same weakness or custom of hers, an ungenerous allusion to which, on the part of Betsey, had first disturbed their harmony that evening. And she saw it still more clearly, when, politely but firmly correcting that lady by the distinct enunciation of the word "Chuffey," Mrs. Prig received the correction with a diabolical laugh.

The best among us have their failings, and it must be conceded of Mrs. Prig, that if there were a blemish in the goodness of her disposition, it was a habit she had of not bestowing all its sharp and acid properties upon her patients (as a thoroughly amiable woman would have done), but of keeping a considerable remainder for the service of her friends. Highly pickled salmon, and lettuces chopped up in vinegar, may, as viands possessing some acidity of their own, have encouraged and increased this failing in Mrs. Prig; and every application to the tea-pot, certainly did; for it was often remarked of her by her friends, that she was most contradictory when most elevated. It is certain that her countenance became about this time derisive and defiant, and that she sat with her arms folded, and one eye shut up: in a somewhat offensive, because obtrusively intelligent, manner.

Mrs. Gamp observing this, felt it the more necessary that Mrs. Prig should know her place, and be made sensible of her exact station in society, as well as of her obligations to herself. She therefore assumed an air of greater patronage and importance, as she went on to answer Mrs. Prig a little more in detail.

"Mr. Chuffey, Betsey," said Mrs. Gamp, "is weak in his mind. Excuse me if I makes remark, that he may neither be so weak as people thinks, nor people may not think he is so weak as they pretends, and what I knows, I knows; and what you don't, you don't; so do not ask me, Betsey. But Mr. Chuffey's friends has made propojals for his bein took care on, and has said to me, 'Mrs. Gamp, *will* you undertake it? We couldn't think,' they says, 'of trustin him to nobody but you, for, Sairey, you are gold as has passed through the furnage. Will you undertake it, at your own price, day and night, and by your own self?' 'No,' I says, 'I will not. Do not reckon on it. There is,' I says, 'but one creetur in the world as I would undertake on sech terms, and her name is Harris. But,' I says, 'I am acquainted with a friend, whose name is Betsey Prig, that I can recommend, and will assist me. Betsey,' I says, 'is always to be trusted, under me, and will be guided as I could desire.'"

Here Mrs. Prig, without any abatement of her offensive manner, again counterfeited abstraction of mind, and stretched out her hand to the tea-pot. It was more than Mrs. Gamp could bear. She stopped the hand of Mrs. Prig with her own, and said, with great feeling:

"No, Betsey! Drink fair, wotever you do!"

Mrs. Prig, thus baffled, threw herself back in her chair, and closing the same eye more emphatically, and folding her arms tighter, suffered her head to roll slowly from side to side, while she surveyed her friend with a contemptuous smile.

Mrs. Gamp resumed:

"Mrs. Harris, Betsey——"

"Bother Mrs. Harris!" said Betsey Prig.

Mrs. Gamp looked at her with amazement, incredulity, and indignation; when Mrs. Prig, shutting her eye still closer, and folding her arms still tighter, uttered these memorable and tremendous words:

"I don't believe there's no sich a person!"

After the utterance of which expressions, she leaned forward, and snapped her fingers once, twice, thrice ; each time nearer to the face of Mrs. Gamp ; and then rose to put on her bonnet, as one who felt that there was now a gulf between them, which nothing could ever bridge across.

The shock of this blow was so violent and sudden, that Mrs. Gamp sat staring at nothing with uplifted eyes, and her mouth open as if she were gasping for breath, until Betsey Prig had got on her bonnet and her shawl, and was gathering the latter about her throat. Then Mrs. Gamp rose—morally and physically rose—and denounced her.

"What !" said Mrs. Gamp, "you bage creetur, have I know'd Mrs. Harris five and thirty year, to be told at last that there an't no sech a person livin ! Have I stood her friend in all her troubles, great and small, for it to come at last to sech a end as this, which her own sweet picter hanging up afore you all the time, to shame your Bragian words ! But well you mayn't believe there's no sech a creetur, for she wouldn't demean herself to look at you, and often has she said, when I have made mention of your name, which, to my sinful sorrow, I have done, 'What, Sairey Gamp ! debage yourself to *her* !' Go along with you !"

"I'm a goin, ma'am, ain't I ?" said Mrs. Prig, stopping as she said it.

"You had better, ma'am," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Do you know who you're talking to, ma'am ?" inquired her visitor.

"Aperiently," said Mrs. Gamp, surveying her with scorn from head to foot, "to Betsey Prig. Aperiently so. I know her. No one better. Go along with you, do !"

"And *you* was a going to take me under you !" cried Mrs. Prig, surveying Mrs. Gamp from head to foot in her turn. "*You* was, was you ! Oh, how kind ! Why, deuce take your imperence," said Mrs. Prig, with a rapid change from banter to ferocity, "what do you mean !"

"Go along with you !" said Mrs. Gamp. "I blush for you."

"You had better blush a little for yourself, while you *are* about it !" said Mrs. Prig. "You and your Chuffeys ! What, the poor old creetur isn't mad enough, isn't he ? Aha !"

"He'd very soon be mad enough, if you had anythink to do with him," said Mrs. Gamp.

"And that's what I was wanted for, is it ?" cried Mrs. Prig, triumphantly. "Yes. But you'll find yourself deceived. I won't go near him. We shall see how you get on without me. I won't have nothink to do with him."

"You never spoke a truer word than that !" said Mrs. Gamp. "Go along with you !"

She was prevented from witnessing the actual retirement of Mrs. Prig from the room, notwithstanding the great desire she had expressed to behold it, by that lady, in her angry withdrawal, coming into contact with the bedstead, and bringing down the previously-mentioned pippins ; three or four of which came rattling on the head of Mrs. Gamp so smartly, that when she recovered from this wooden shower-bath, Mrs. Prig was gone.

She had the satisfaction, however, of hearing the deep voice of Betsey, proclaiming her injuries and her determination to have nothing to do

with Mr. Chuffey, down the stairs, and along the passage, and even out in Kingsgate-street. Likewise, of seeing in her own apartment, in the place of Mrs. Prig, Mr. Sweedlepipe and two gentlemen.

"Why, bless my life!" exclaimed the little barber, "What's amiss? The noise you ladies have been making, Mrs. Gamp! Why, these two gentlemen have been standing on the stairs, outside the door, nearly all the time, trying to make you hear, while you were pelting away, hammer and tongs! It'll be the death of the little bulfinch in the shop, that draws his own water. In his fright, he's been a straining himself all to bits, drawing more water than he could drink in a twelvemonth. He must have thought it was Fire!"

Mrs. Gamp had in the meanwhile sunk into her chair, from whence, turning up her overflowing eyes, and clasping her hands, she delivered the following lamentation:

"Oh, Mr. Sweedlepipes, which Mr. Westlock also, if my eyes do not deceive me, and a friend not havin the pleasure of bein bekknown, wot I have took from Betsey Prig this blessed night, no mortal creetur knows! If she had abuged me, bein in liquor, which I thought I smelt her wen she come, but could not so believe, not bein used myself"—Mrs. Gamp, by the way, was pretty far gone, and the fragrance of the tea-pot was strong in the room—"I could have bore it with a thankful art. But the words she spoke of Mrs. Harris, lambs could not forgive. No, Betsey!" said Mrs. Gamp, in a violent burst of feeling, "nor worms forget!"

The little barber scratched his head, and shook it, and looked at the teapot, and gradually got out of the room. John Westlock, taking a chair, sat down on one side of Mrs. Gamp. Martin, taking the foot of the bed, supported her on the other.

"You wonder what we want, I dare say," observed John. "I'll tell you presently, when you have recovered. It's not pressing, for a few minutes or so. How do you find yourself? Better?"

Mrs. Gamp shed more tears, shook her head, and feebly pronounced Mrs. Harris's name.

"Have a little—" John was at a loss what to call it.

"Tea," suggested Martin.

"It ain't tea," said Mrs. Gamp.

"Physic of some sort, I suppose," cried John. "Have a little."

Mrs. Gamp was prevailed upon to take a glassful. "On condition," she passionately observed, "as Betsey never has another stroke of work from me."

"Certainly not," said John. "She shall never help to nurse *me*."

"To think," said Mrs. Gamp, "as she should ever have helped to nuss that friend of yourn, and been so near of hearing things that—Ah!"

John looked at Martin.

"Yes," he said. "That was a narrow escape, Mrs. Gamp."

"Narrer, in-deed!" she returned. "It was only my having the night, and hearin of him in his wanderins; and her the day, that saved it. Wot would she have said and done, if she had know'd what I know; that perfeejus wretch! Yet, oh good gracious me!" cried Mrs. Gamp, tramp-

ling on the floor, in the absence of Mrs. Prig, "that I should hear from that same woman's lips what I have heerd her speak of Mrs. Harris!"

"Never mind," said John. "You know it is not true."

"Isn't true!" cried Mrs. Gamp. "True! Don't I know as that dear woman is expectin of me at this minnit, Mr. Westlock, and is a lookin out of winder down the street, with little Tommy Harris in her arms, as calls me his own Gammy, and truly calls for bless the mottled little legs of that there precious child (like Canterbury Brawn his own dear father says, which so they are) his own. I have been, ever since I found him, Mr. Westlock, with his small red worsted shoe a gurglin in his throat, where he had put it in his play, a chick, wile they was leavin of him on the floor a lookin for it through the ouse and him a choakin sweetly in the parlor! Oh, Betsey Prig, wot wickedness you've shewed this night, but never shall you darken Sairey's doors agen, you twining serpiant!"

"You were always so kind to her, too!" said John, consolingly.

"That's the cuttin part. That's where it hurts me, Mr. Westlock," Mrs. Gamp replied; holding out her glass unconsciously, while Martin filled it.

"Chosen to help you with Mr. Lewsome!" said John. "Chosen to help you with Mr. Chuffey!"

"Chose once, but chose no more," cried Mrs. Gamp. "No pardnership with Betsey Prig agen sir!"

"No no," said John. "That would never do."

"I don't know as it ever would have done, sir," Mrs. Gamp replied, with the solemnity peculiar to a certain stage of intoxication. "Now that the marks," by which Mrs. Gamp is supposed to have meant mask, "is off that creetur's face, I do not think it ever would have done. There are reagions in families for keepin things a secret, Mr. Westlock, and havin only them about you as you knows you can repoge in. Who could repoge in Betsey Prig, arter her words of Mrs. Harris, settin in that chair afore my eyes!"

"Quite true," said John: "quite. I hope you have time to find another assistant, Mrs. Gamp?"

Between her indignation and the tea-pot, her powers of comprehending what was said to her began to fail. She looked at John with tearful eyes, and murmuring the well-remembered name which Mrs. Prig had challenged—as if it were a talisman against all earthly sorrows—seemed to wander in her mind.

"I hope," repeated John, "that you have time to find another assistant?"

"Which short it is, indeed," cried Mrs. Gamp, turning up her languid eyes, and clasping Mr. Westlock's wrist with matronly affection. "Tomorrow evenin, sir, I waits upon his friends. Mr. Chuzzlewit apinted it from nine to ten."

"From nine to ten," said John, with a significant glance at Martin; "and then Mr. Chuffey retires into safe keeping, does he?"

"He needs to be kep safe, I do assure you," Mrs. Gamp replied, with a mysterious air. "Other people besides me has had a happy deliverance from Betsey Prig. I little know'd that woman. She'd have let it out!"

"Let *him* out, you mean," said John.

"Do I!" retorted Mrs. Gamp. "Oh!"

The severely ironical character of this reply was strengthened by a very slow nod, and a still slower drawing down of the corners of Mrs. Gamp's mouth. She added with extreme stateliness of manner, after indulging in a short doze:

"But I am a keepin of you gentlemen, and time is precious."

Mingling with that delusion of the tea-pot which inspired her with the belief that they wanted her to go somewhere immediately, a shrewd avoidance of any further reference to the topics into which she had lately strayed, Mrs. Gamp rose; and putting away the tea-pot in its accustomed place, and locking the cupboard with much gravity, proceeded to attire herself for a professional visit.

This preparation was easily made, as it required nothing more than the snuffy black bonnet, the snuffy black shawl, the pattens, and the indispensable umbrella, without which neither a lying-in nor a laying-out could by any possibility be attempted. When Mrs. Gamp had invested herself with these appendages she returned to her chair, and sitting down again, declared herself quite ready.

"It's a appiness to know as one can benefit the poor sweet creetur," she observed, "I'm sure. It isn't all as can. The torters Betsy Prig inflicts is frightful."

Closing her eyes as she made this remark, in the acuteness of her commiseration for Betsy's patients, she forgot to open them again until she dropped a patten. Her nap was also broken at intervals, like the fabled slumbers of Friar Bacon, by the dropping of the other patten, and of the umbrella; but when she had got rid of these incumbrances, her sleep was peaceful.

The two young men looked at each other, ludicrously enough; and Martin, stifling his disposition to laugh, whispered in John Westlock's ear:

"What shall we do now?"

"Stay here," he replied.

Mrs. Gamp was heard to murmur "Mrs. Harris!" in her sleep.

"Rely upon it," whispered John, looking cautiously towards her, "that you shall question this old clerk, though you go as Mrs. Harris herself. We know quite enough to carry her our own way now, at all events; thanks to this quarrel, which confirms the old saying that, when rogues fall out, honest people get what they want. Let Jonas Chuzzlewit look to himself; and let her sleep as long as she likes. We shall gain our end in good time."

CHAPTER L.

SURPRISES TOM PINCH VERY MUCH, AND SHOWS HOW CERTAIN CONFIDENCES
PASSED BETWEEN HIM AND HIS SISTER.

It was the next evening; and Tom and his sister were sitting together before tea, talking, in their usual quiet way, about a great many things, but not at all about Lewsome's story or anything connected with it; for

John Westlock—really John, for so young a man, was one of the most considerate fellows in the world—had particularly advised Tom not to mention it to his sister just yet, in case it should disquiet her. “And I wouldn’t, Tom,” he said, with a little hesitation, “I wouldn’t have a shadow on her happy face, or an uneasy thought in her gentle heart, for all the wealth and honours of the universe!” Really John was uncommonly kind; extraordinarily kind. If he had been her father, Tom said, he could not have taken a greater interest in her.

But although Tom and his sister were extremely conversational, they were less lively, and less cheerful, than usual. Tom had no idea that this originated with Ruth, but took it for granted that he was rather dull himself. In truth he was; for the lightest cloud upon the Heaven of her quiet mind, cast its shadow upon Tom.

And there was a cloud on little Ruth that evening. Yes, indeed. When Tom was looking in another direction, her bright eyes, stealing on towards his face, would sparkle still more brightly than their custom was, and then grow dim. When Tom was silent, looking out upon the summer weather, she would sometimes make a hasty movement, as if she were about to throw herself upon his neck; then check the impulse, and when he looked round, show a laughing face, and speak to him very merrily. When she had anything to give Tom, or had any excuse for coming near him, she would flutter about him, and lay her little bashful hand upon his shoulder, and not be willing to withdraw it; and would show by all such means that there was something on her heart which in her great love she longed to say to him, but had not the courage to utter.

So they were sitting, she with her work before her, but not working, and Tom with his book beside him, but not reading, when Martin knocked at the door. Anticipating who it was, Tom went to open it; and he and Martin came back into the room together. Tom looked surprised, for in answer to his cordial greeting Martin had hardly spoken a word.

Ruth also saw that there was something strange in the manner of their visitor, and raised her eyes inquiringly to Tom’s face, as if she were seeking an explanation there. Tom shook his head, and made the same mute appeal to Martin.

Martin did not sit down, but walked up to the window, and stood there, looking out. He turned round after a few moments to speak, but hastily averted his head again, without doing so.

“What has happened, Martin?” Tom anxiously inquired. “My dear fellow, what bad news do you bring?”

“Oh Tom!” replied Martin, in a tone of deep reproach. “To hear you feign that interest in anything that happens to me, hurts me even more than your ungenerous dealing.”

“My ungenerous dealing! Martin! My—” Tom could get no further.

“How could you Tom, how could you suffer me to thank you so fervently and sincerely for your friendship; and not tell me, like a man, that you had deserted me! Was it true, Tom! Was it honest! Was it worthy of what you used to be: of what I am sure you used to be:

to tempt me, when you had turned against me, into pouring out my heart! Oh Tom!"

His tone was one of such strong injury and yet of so much grief for the loss of a friend he had trusted in; it expressed such high past love for Tom, and so much sorrow and compassion for his supposed unworthiness; that Tom, for a moment, put his hand before his face, and had no more power of justifying himself, than if he had been a monster of deceit and falsehood.

"I protest, as I must die," said Martin, "that I grieve over the loss of what I thought you; and have no anger in the recollection of my own injuries. It is only at such a time, and after such a discovery, that we know the full measure of our old regard for the subject of it. And I swear, little as I showed it; little as I know I showed it; that when I had the least consideration for you, Tom, I loved you like a brother."

Tom was composed by this time, and might have been the Spirit of Truth, in a homely dress—it very often wears a homely dress, thank God!—when he replied to him:

"Martin," he said, "I don't know what is in your mind, or who has abused it, or by what extraordinary means. But the means are false. There is no truth whatever in the impression under which you labour. It is a delusion from first to last; and I warn you that you will deeply regret the wrong you do me. I can honestly say that I have been true to you, and to myself. You will be very sorry for this. Indeed, you will be very sorry for it, Martin."

"I am sorry," returned Martin, shaking his head. "I never knew what it was to be sorry in my heart, until now."

"At least," said Tom, "if I had always been what you charge me with being now, and had never had a place in your regard, but had always been despised by you, and had always deserved it, you would tell me in what you have found me to be treacherous; and on what grounds you proceed. I do not intreat you, therefore, to give me that satisfaction as a favour, Martin; but I ask it of you as a right."

"My own eyes are my witnesses," returned Martin. "Am I to believe them?"

"No," said Tom, calmly. "Not if they accuse me."

"Your own words. Your own manner," pursued Martin. "Am I to believe *them*?"

"No," replied Tom, calmly. "Not if they accuse me. But they never have accused me. Whoever has perverted them to such a purpose, has wronged me, almost as cruelly;" his calmness rather failed him here; "as you have done."

"I came here," said Martin; "and I appeal to your good sister to hear me——"

"Not to her," interrupted Tom. "Pray, do not appeal to her. She will never believe you."

He drew her arm through his own, as he said it.

"I believe it, Tom!"

"No, no," cried Tom, "of course not. I said so. Why, tut, tut, tut. What a silly little thing you are!"

"I never meant," said Martin, hastily, "to appeal to you against your brother. Do not think me so unmanly and unkind. I merely appealed to you to hear my declaration, that I came here for no purpose of reproach: I have not one to vent: but in deep regret. You could not know in what bitterness of regret, unless you knew how often I have thought of Tom; how long in almost hopeless circumstances, I have looked forward to the better estimation of his friendship; and how steadfastly I have believed and trusted in him."

"Tut, tut," said Tom, stopping her as she was about to speak. "He is mistaken. He is deceived. Why should you mind? He is sure to be set right at last."

"Heaven bless the day that sets me right!" cried Martin, "if it could ever come!"

"Amen!" said Tom. "And it will!"

Martin paused, and then said in a still milder voice:

"You have chosen for yourself, Tom, and will be relieved by our parting. It is not an angry one. There is no anger on my side—"

"There is none on mine," said Tom.

"—It is merely what you have brought about, and worked to bring about. I say again, you have chosen for yourself. You have made the choice that might have been expected in most people situated as you are, but which I did not expect in you. For that, perhaps, I should blame my own judgment more than you. There is wealth and favour worth having, on one side; and there is the worthless friendship of an abandoned, struggling fellow, on the other. You were free to make your election, and you made it; and the choice was not difficult. But those who have not the courage to resist such temptations, should have the courage to avow that they have yielded to them; and I *do* blame you for this, Tom: that you received me with a show of warmth, encouraged me to be frank and plain-spoken, tempted me to confide in you, and professed that you were able to be mine; when you had sold yourself to others. I do not believe," said Martin, with great emotion: "hear me say it from my heart; I *cannot* believe, Tom, now that I am standing face to face with you, that it would have been in your nature to do me any serious harm, even though I had not discovered, by chance, in whose employment you were. But I should have incumbered you; I should have led you into more double-dealing; I should have hazarded your retaining the favour for which you have paid so high a price, bartering away your former self; and it is best for both of us that I have found out what you so much desired to keep secret."

"Be just," said Tom; who had not removed his mild gaze from Martin's face since the commencement of this last address; "be just even in your injustice, Martin. You forget. You have not yet told me what your accusation is!"

"Why should I?" returned Martin, waving his hand, and moving towards the door. "You could not know it the better for my dwelling on it, and though it would be really none the worse, it might seem to me to be. No, Tom. Bygones shall be bygones between us. I can take leave of you at this moment, and in this place: in which you are so amiable and so good: as heartily, if not as

cheerfully, as ever I have done since we first met. All good go with you, Tom!—I—”

“You leave me so? You can leave me so, can you?” said Tom.

“I—you—you have chosen for yourself, Tom! I—I hope it was a rash choice,” Martin faltered. “I think it was. I am sure it was! Good bye!”

And he was gone.

Tom led his little sister to her chair, and sat down in his own. He took his book, and read, or seemed to read. Presently he said aloud: turning a leaf as he spoke: “He will be very sorry for this.” And a tear stole down his face, and dropped upon the page.

Ruth nestled down beside him on her knees, and clasped her arms about his neck.

“No Tom! No no! Be comforted! Dear Tom!”

“I am quite—comforted,” said Tom. “It will be set right.”

“Such a cruel, bad return!” cried Ruth.

“No no,” said Tom. “He believes it. I cannot imagine why. But it will be set right.”

More closely yet, she nestled down about him; and wept as if her heart would break.

“Don’t. Don’t,” said Tom. “Why do you hide your face, my dear!”

Then in a burst of tears, it all broke out at last.

“Oh Tom, dear Tom, I know your secret heart. I have found it out; you couldn’t hide the truth from me. Why didn’t you tell me? I am sure I could have made you happier, if you had! You love her Tom, so dearly!”

Tom made a motion with his hand as if he would have put his sister hurriedly away; but it clasped upon hers, and all his little history was written in the action. All its pathetic eloquence was in the silent touch.

“In spite of that,” said Ruth, “you have been so faithful and so good, dear; in spite of that, you have been so true and self-denying, and have struggled with yourself; in spite of that, you have been so gentle, and so kind, and even-tempered, that I have never seen you give a hasty look, or heard you say one irritable word. In spite of all, you have been so cruelly mistaken. Oh Tom, dear Tom, loved as no other brother can be, will *this* be set right too! Will it Tom! Will you always have this sorrow in your breast: you who deserve to be so happy: or is there any hope!”

And still she hid her face from Tom, and clasped him round the neck, and wept for him, and poured out all her woman’s heart and soul in the relief and pain of this disclosure.

It was not very long before she and Tom were sitting side by side, and she was looking with an earnest quietness in Tom’s face. Then Tom spoke to her thus: cheerily, though gravely.

“I am very glad, my dear, that this has passed between us. Not because it assures me of your tender affection (for I was well assured of that, before), but because it relieves my mind of a great weight.”

Tom’s eyes glistened when he spoke of her affection; and he kissed her on the cheek.

“My dear girl,” said Tom: “with whatever feeling I regard her;”

they seemed to avoid the name by mutual consent ; " I have long ago—I am sure I may say from the very first—looked upon it as a dream. As something that might possibly have happened under very different circumstances, but which can never be. Now, tell me. What would you have set right ? "

She gave Tom such a significant little look, that he was obliged to take it for an answer whether he would or no ; and to go on.

" By her own choice and free consent, my love, she is betrothed to Martin ; and was, long before either of them knew of my existence. You would have her betrothed to me ? "

" Yes," she said directly.

" Yes," rejoined Tom, " but that might be setting it wrong, instead of right. Do you think," said Tom, with a grave smile, " that even if she had never seen him, it is very likely she would have fallen in love with Me ? "

" Why not, dear Tom ? "

Tom shook his head, and smiled again.

" You think of me, Ruth," said Tom, " and it is very natural that you should, as if I were a character in a book ; and you make it a sort of poetical justice that I should, by some impossible means or other, come, at last, to marry the person I love. But there is a much higher justice than poetical justice my dear, and it does not order events upon the same principle. Accordingly people who read about heroes in books, and choose to make heroes of themselves out of books, consider it a very fine thing to be discontented and gloomy, and misanthropical, and perhaps a little blasphemous, because they cannot have everything ordered for their individual accommodation. Would you like me to become one of that sort of people ? "

" No, Tom. But still I know," she added timidly, " that this is a sorrow to you in your own better way."

Tom thought of disputing the position. But it would have been mere folly, and he gave it up.

" My dear," said Tom, " I will repay your affection with the Truth, and all the Truth. It is a sorrow to me. I have proved it to be so sometimes, though I have always striven against it. But somebody who is precious to you may die, and you may dream that you are in heaven with the departed spirit, and you may find it a sorrow to wake to the life on earth, which is no harder to be borne than when you fell asleep. It is sorrowful to me to contemplate my dream, which I always knew was a dream, even when it first presented itself ; but the realities about me are not to blame. They are the same as they were. My sister, my sweet companion, who makes this place so dear, is she less devoted to me, Ruth, than she would have been, if this vision had never troubled me ? My old friend John, who might so easily have treated me with coldness and neglect, is he less cordial to me ? The world about me, is there less good in that ? Are my words to be harsh and my looks to be sour, and is my heart to grow cold, because there has fallen in my way a good and beautiful creature, who but for the selfish regret that I cannot call her my own, would, like all other good and beautiful creatures, make me happier and better ! No, my dear sister. No," said Tom, stoutly. " Remembering all my means of happiness, I

hardly dare to call this lurking something, a sorrow ; but whatever name it may justly bear, I thank Heaven that it renders me more sensible of affection and attachment, and softens me in fifty ways. Not less happy. Not less happy, Ruth !”

She could not speak to him, but she loved him, as he well deserved. Even as he deserved, she loved him.

“She will open Martin’s eyes,” said Tom, with a glow of pride, “and that (which is indeed wrong) will be set right. Nothing will persuade her, I know, that I have betrayed him. It will be set right through her, and he will be very sorry for it. Our secret, Ruth, is our own, and lives and dies with us. I don’t believe I ever could have told it you,” said Tom, with a smile, “but how glad I am to think you have found it out !”

They had never taken such a pleasant walk as they took that night. Tom told her all so freely, and so simply, and was so desirous to return her tenderness with his fullest confidence, that they prolonged it far beyond their usual hour, and sat up late when they came home. And when they parted for the night there was such a tranquil, beautiful expression in Tom’s face, that she could not bear to shut it out, but going back on tip-toe to his chamber-door, looked in, and stood there till he saw her, and then embracing him again, withdrew. And in her prayers, and in her sleep—good times to be remembered with such fervor, Tom !—his name was uppermost.

When he was left alone, Tom pondered very much on this discovery of her’s, and greatly wondered what had led her to it. “Because,” thought Tom, “I have been so very careful. It was foolish and unnecessary in me, as I clearly see now, when I am so relieved by her knowing it ; but I have been so very careful to conceal it from her. Of course I knew that she was intelligent and quick, and for that reason was more upon my guard ; but I was not in the least prepared for this. I am sure her discovery has been sudden too. Dear me !” said Tom. “It’s a most singular instance of penetration !”

Tom could not get it out of his head. There it was, when his head was on his pillow.

“How she trembled when she began to tell me she knew it !” thought Tom, recalling all the little incidents and circumstances ; “and how her face flushed ! But that was natural. Oh quite natural ! That needs no accounting for.”

Tom little thought how natural it was. Tom little knew that there was that in Ruth’s own heart, but newly set there, which had helped her to the reading of his mystery. Ah Tom ! He didn’t understand the whispers of the Temple Fountain, though he passed it every day.

Who so lively and cheerful as busy Ruth next morning ! Her early tap at Tom’s door, and her light foot outside, would have been music to him though she had not spoken. But she said it was the brightest morning ever seen ; and so it was ; and if it had been otherwise, she would have made it so to Tom.

She was ready with his neat breakfast when he went down stairs, and had her bonnet ready for the early walk, and was so full of news, that Tom was lost in wonder. She might have been up all night, collecting it for his entertainment. There was Mr. Nadgett not come home yet,

and there was bread down a penny a loaf, and there was twice as much strength in this tea as in the last, and the milkwoman's husband had come out of the hospital cured, and the curly-headed child over the way had been lost all yesterday, and she was going to make all sorts of preserves in a desperate hurry, and there happened to be a saucepan in the house which was the very saucepan for the purpose; and she knew all about the last book Tom had brought home, all through, though it was a teaser to read; and she had so much to tell him that she had finished breakfast first. Then she had her little bonnet on, and the tea and sugar locked up, and the keys in her reticule, and the flower, as usual, in Tom's coat, and was in all respects quite ready to accompany him, before Tom knew she had begun to prepare. And in short, as Tom said, with a confidence in his own assertion which amounted to a defiance of the public in general, there never was such a little woman.

She made Tom talkative. It was impossible to resist her. She put such enticing questions to him; about books, and about dates of churches, and about organs, and about the Temple, and about all kinds of things. Indeed, she lightened the way (and Tom's heart with it) to that degree, that the Temple looked quite blank and solitary when he parted from her at the gate.

"No Mr. Fips's friend to-day, I suppose," thought Tom, as he ascended the stairs.

Not yet, at any rate, for the door was closed as usual, and Tom opened it with his key. He had got the books into perfect order now, and had mended the torn leaves, and pasted up the broken backs, and substituted neat labels for the worn-out letterings. It looked a different place, it was so orderly and neat: Tom felt some pride in contemplating the change he had wrought, though there was no one to approve or disapprove of it.

He was at present occupied in making a fair copy of his draught of the catalogue; on which, as there was no hurry, he was painfully concentrating all the ingenious and laborious neatness he had ever expended on map or plan in Mr. Pecksniff's workroom. It was a very marvel of a catalogue; for Tom sometimes thought he was really getting his money too easily, and he had determined within himself that this document should take a little of his superfluous leisure out of him.

So, with pens and ruler, and compasses and india-rubber, and pencil, and black ink, and red ink, Tom worked away all the morning. He thought a good deal about Martin and their interview of yesterday, and would have been far easier in his mind if he could have resolved to confide it to his friend John, and to have taken his opinion on the subject. But besides that he knew what John's boiling indignation would be, he bethought himself that he was helping Martin now in a matter of great moment, and that to deprive the latter of his assistance at such a crisis of affairs, would be to inflict a serious injury upon him.

"So I'll keep it to myself," said Tom, with a sigh. "I'll keep it to myself."

And to work he went again, more assiduously than ever, with the pens, and the ruler, and the india-rubber, and the pencil, and the black ink, and the red ink, that he might forget it.

He had laboured away for another hour or more, when he heard a footstep in the entry, down below.

"Ah!" said Tom, looking towards the door, "time was, not long ago either, when that would have set me wondering and expecting. But I have left off now."

The footstep came on, up the stairs.

"Thirty-six, thirty-seven, thirty-eight," said Tom, counting. "Now you'll stop. Nobody ever comes past the thirty-eighth stair."

The person did stop, certainly, but only to take breath; for up the footstep came again. Forty, forty-one, forty-two, and so on.

The door stood open. As the tread advanced, Tom looked impatiently and eagerly towards it. When a figure came upon the landing, and arriving in the doorway, stopped and gazed at him, he rose up from his chair, and half believed he saw a spirit.

Old Martin Chuzzlewit. The same whom he had left at Mr. Pecksniff's, weak and sinking.

The same! No, not the same, for this old man, though old, was strong, and leaned upon his stick with a vigorous hand, while with the other he signed to Tom to make no noise. One glance at the resolute face, the watchful eye, the vigorous hand upon the staff, the triumphed purpose in the figure, and such a light broke in on Tom as blinded him.

"You have expected me," said Martin, "a long time."

"I was told that my employer would arrive soon," said Tom; "but—"

"I know. You were ignorant who he was. It was my desire. I am glad it has been so well observed. I intended to have been with you much sooner. I thought the time had come. I thought I could know no more, and no worse, of him, than I did on that day when I saw you last. But I was wrong."

He had by this time come up to Tom, and now he seized his hand.

"I have lived in his house, Pinch, and had him fawning on me days and weeks, and months. You know it. I have suffered him to treat me like his tool and instrument. You know it; you have seen me there. I have undergone ten thousand times as much as I could have endured if I had been the miserable weak old man he took me for. You know it. I have seen him offer love to Mary. You know it; who better—who better, my true heart! I have had his base soul bare before me, day by day, and have not betrayed myself once. I never could have undergone such torture but for looking forward to this time."

He stopped, even in the passion of his speech; if that can be called passion which was so resolute and steady; to press Tom's hand again. Then he said, in great excitement:

"Close the door, close the door. He will not be long after me, but may come too soon. The time now drawing on," said the old man, hurriedly: his eyes and whole face brightening as he spoke: "will make amends for all. I wouldn't have him die or hang himself for millions of golden pieces! Close the door!"

Tom did so; hardly knowing yet whether he was awake, or in a dream.

LONDON AND PARIS:

THE TWO GREAT RIVALS.

Betwixt the two great Capitals we see
A spirit of contending rivalry.

IN arts, sciences, inventions, and improvements, London and Paris have long been regarded as "*two great rivals*." Where the Gallic capital has been the scene of some novel invention, the English metropolis has followed it up by some sterling addition or improvement. Where Paris has *introduced* some new work of art, London has *carried it out*, and brought it to perfection. Such is the *general* idea of this national rivalry. The *particular* point (with which we have *alone* to do), is the grand struggle for superiority in the *art of dress*. It would be unfair on our part, and would betray an ignorant and ridiculous partiality, did we not award to the French metropolis a "just meed of praise" in this respect. Paris has displayed taste, elegance, and fashion, too superior not to be viewed with the highest admiration. The "*haut ton*" circles have here been gratified in all the tasty *minutiae* of attire. Many of the choicest adornments of the human figure—many of the most graceful elegancies which have formed the attractions of a glittering court—have sprung up and bloomed to perfection in this garden of fashion. Such was the character of the national competitor—the "*great rival*" with which our own capital had to contend. Had Paris been a city of *inferior* claims in the art of dress—had her pretensions to fashionable beauty been less than what they really are—then, indeed, there would have been less honour and less difficulty in obtaining the prize of precedence. When, however, we view Paris as a mighty city of mighty improvements, we shall come to the conclusion, that London, as a "Rival," had much to do. For some time the French metropolis was considerably "a-head"—London was in the back-ground, and the "prize-cup" of this great national "match" seemed within the grasp of the Gallic competitor. Such, however, was not to be the case,

E. MOSES AND SON

made their *entrée*, and the "odds" were materially altered. "LONDON and PARIS," like two "coursers," were soon observed to be "neck and neck." The impetus which MOSES & SON imparted, impelled the English capital with a "race-horse" speed; and now, amid the acclamations of millions, London is proclaimed as "*the winner of the prize*." Such assertions may, at first sight, appear exaggerated—E. MOSES & SON may seem to be laying claim to that which is not their due. But those who have marked the changes which they every season bring about,—those who have made themselves acquainted with the *true* character of E. MOSES & SON'S Establishment, as a

"TEMPLE OF FASHION,"

will at once see that no such Emporium could possibly exist, without causing a *mighty renovation in the art of dress*; and stamping London as, not only a "*Rival for Paris*," but

"THE RIVAL OF THE WORLD."

Gentlemen have no longer to resort to Parisian Houses for attire elegantly fashionable. The careful and constant study which

2 E. Moses & Son, Tailors, Woollen Drapers, & Outfitters.

E. MOSES & SON bestow upon their business, is such as to afford the highest gratification to the public, in the fashion and quality of costumes.

In their last advertisement, E. MOSES & SON made especial allusion to their Summer Stock; and happy are they to state, that they have not only met with a favourable response on the part of the Public, but that they have been encouraged by marks of the highest approval. Since their last address, they have added to their former stock some of the most exquisite designs in cloth that were ever produced. E. MOSES & SON have also to state, that they have made immense purchases of *rich silks, satins, and velvets, for vests, and elegant patterns for trouserings*, such as have never before been introduced to the notice of the public; and such as will stamp

THE BESPOKE DEPARTMENT

of their Establishment as especially worthy the attention of gentlemen.

The proprietors would also refer, in a particular manner, to their stock of

JUVENILE CLOTHING.

They fear they have not been sufficiently strong on this department of their business, considering its *immense claims on public estimation*. Parents and guardians will not only find the warehouse of E. MOSES and SON matchless in the superiority of its

BOYS' CLOTHING,


but, at the same time, highly beneficial to the public; saving the purchaser at least 50 PER CENT.

E. MOSES AND SON,

Tailors, Drapers, and Outfitters,

154, Minories, and 86, Aldgate,

CITY (OPPOSITE THE CHURCH).

 The Price of every article is marked in Plain Figures, from which no abatement can be made. Any article, not approved of, exchanged; or, if preferred, *the money returned*.

PLEASE TO OBSERVE.—The new Spring Books are now in circulation, and may be had (gratis) on application, or sent postage free to any part of the country.

N.B. To prevent disappointment, please to observe that this Establishment closes at Sunset on Friday Evenings, resuming business after Sunset on Saturday Evenings until Twelve o'clock.

OBSERVE THE CAUTION!—E. MOSES AND SON are obliged to guard the Public against Imposition, having learned that the *un-tradesman-like falsehood* of being connected with *them*, or “it’s the same concern,” has been resorted to in many instances, and for *obvious reasons*. They have **NO CONNEXION** with any other house, and those who desire *genuine and cheap* Clothing should (to prevent disappointment, &c.) call at, or send to 154, Minories, or 86, Aldgate, City, London.

BESPOKE DEPARTMENT.**DRESS COATS.**

Super	1 12 0
Saxony	2 2 0
Imperial, usually called "best"	2 10 0
First and Best	2 15 0

FROCK COATS.

Superfine Frock Coat ..	1 12 0
Saxony ditto	2 2 0
Imperial ditto	2 10 0
Imperial Super Frock	2 15 0
Extra Imperial Saxony Best Manufactured ..	3 3 0

SPRING & OVER COATS.

Cashmerette Taglionis and Codringtons, } Silk Collar and Cuffs	1 5 0
Cashmerette Codrington, lined through- out, with Silk Cuffs and Facings	1 10 0
Superior Tweeds, Silk Collar and Cuffs ..	1 0 0
Ditto Light Zephyrs, ditto	1 5 0
Waterproof ditto, Velvet Collar & Cuffs ..	1 10 0

TROUSERS.

Doeskin	0 10 0
Superior ditto	0 16 0
Ditto best Quality	1 1 0
Cassimere ditto	0 15 0
Ditto Best Black dress	1 6 0
Dress Linen Drill Trousers	0 9 0
Elegant Patterns in Single Does	0 14 0
Cotton Cord breeches	0 8 0
Woollen ditto ditto	0 14 6
Cassimere, any color	0 15 0
Best ditto	1 2 0
Cassimere Gaiters	0 7 0

WAISTCOATS.

Rich Washing Satins, warranted to retain } their colour	0 9 6
Splendid Summer Vests	0 7 0
Ditto, three for	1 0 0
Splendid Satin Vests	0 11 0
Or three for	1 10 0
Cassimere ditto	0 8 0
Fine ditto	0 9 6
Genoa Velvet	0 18 6

CLOAKS.

Plain Cloth Cloak	from 1 3 0
Opera ditto	1 15 0
Blue Military Spanish	2 8 0
Best Superfine ditto	3 3 0
Waterproof Camlets, &c. &c., proportionably low.	

**Russians, or Fur Coats,
From £2 2s.****LADIES' RIDING HABITS.**

Summer Cloth Habits, with $\frac{1}{2}$ train.. from	2 0 0
Ditto Cashmere	2 15 0
Superior Cloth do. do.	3 10 0
Extra do. do. do.	4 10 0

BOYS' CLOTHES.

Hussar Suit	1 8 0
Ditto superior quality	1 15 0
Tunic Suit, handsomely braided	1 10 0
Do. superior quality, faced with Silk	1 18 0

YEARLY CONTRACTS.**BEST QUALITY MADE.**

Two Suits Best Wool-dyed West of England	8 0 0
Three ditto ditto	12 0 0
Four ditto ditto	15 15 0

SECOND OR SUPER.

Two Suits any colour	6 10 0
Three ditto	9 10 0
Four ditto	12 10 0

LIVERIES.**PAGES.**

Cloth Suit	1 7 0
Refine do.	1 10 0
Super do.	1 19 0

GROOMS.

Refine Coat, Vest, Breeches, &c.	3 0 0
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COACHMEN.

Refine Coat, Vest, Breeches, &c.	3 6 0
Super ditto	3 10 6

FOOTMEN.

Refine Coat, Vest, Breeches, &c.	2 15 0
Super ditto	3 5 0

GAMEKEEPERS.

Shooting Coat, Vest, Breeches, &c.	1 6 0
Super ditto	1 14 0
Very Best do. Manufactured	2 5 0

SUNDRIES.

Coachman's Plain Great Coat	2 6 0
Superior Quality	2 18 0
Footman's Great Coat	2 4 0
Superior quality	2 14 0
Stable Suits	from 0 18 0
Round Waiting Jacket	0 5 0
Ditto do. Coatses	0 11 6

NAVAL, MILITARY, AND INDIA UNIFORMS.

Goods not approved of may be exchanged, or (if preferred) the money will be returned without any objection.



To prevent disappointment, please to observe that our Establishment is closed, from Sunset Friday Evening until Sunset Saturday Evening, when business is resumed until 12 o'clock.

READY-MADE DEPARTMENT.

SPRING COATS.

Jean, Holland, Grand Drill, Diagonal, &c.	from	0	2	3
Ditto superior quality	0	3	6	
Ditto ditto	0	4	6	
Superior Light Coat	0	11	6	
Victoria ditto, expressly manufactured for them	0	6	6	
York Wrapper	0	7	6	
Ditto, a superior article, Silk Collar and Cuffs	0	9	6	
Ditto ditto, lined throughout	0	11	6	
Cashmerette Cloth Coat, a very light article, Velvet Collar and Cuffs	0	16	0	
Anglo-Saxon cloth, Merinoes and Water-proof Tweed, an Exquisite, Gentlemanly and novel article (registered)	0	8	6	

Boys' Spring Coats in all the above patterns.

MEN'S WINTER COATS.

Pea Coat	from	0	9	0
American ditto	0	12	0	
Blue Chesterfield, velvet trimmed	0	10	6	
Ditto a better quality, Indigo dye	0	15	0	
Ditto with Silk Velvet Collar & Cuffs, a very superior article	1	6	0	
Arab ditto Velvet trimmed	0	14	0	
Fashionable Blue Taglioni	0	9	6	
Ditto a better quality edged, &c.	0	12	6	
Ditto in every variety in plain and mixed Beavers with Velvet Collars, Cuffs, &c.	0	18	0	
Russian Peltoes, Silk Velvet Collars	1	5	0	
Petersham Coats	0	15	0	
Ditto Over ditto	0	17	6	
Superfine double milled Cloth Great Coats	1	12	0	
Extra fine ditto	2	2	0	
Double Breasted Beaver Codrington	0	15	0	
Ditto a superior article in every variety	1	0	0	
York Wrapper in every colour and shade	0	16	0	

FOR MECHANICS.

(MEN.)

Jean Coats	from	0	5	6
Beaverteen ditto	0	8	0	
Flannel Linsey Jackets	0	2	7	
Beaverteen ditto	0	3	6	
Moleskin ditto	0	5	6	

TROUSERS.

Fustian Trousers	from	0	1	10
Beaverteen ditto	0	3	0	
Moleskin ditto	0	4	6	
Superior ditto	0	5	6	
Cloth-finished ditto, a better looking article	0	6	6	
Plain and Fancy Cantoan ditto	0	5	0	
Ditto Drill ditto	0	5	0	
Plain and Fancy Gambroon	from	0	5	9
An endless variety of Plain and Fancy Winter and Summer Trousers, which defy description	0	5	0	

BOYS' CLOTHES.

Tunic Suit, neatly braided	from	0	16	0
Ditto, a superior quality	1	1	0	
Hussar Suit, consisting of Jacket, Vest and Trousers	0	17	0	
Ditto, a superior quality	1	1	0	

DRESS COATS.

Dress Coat	from	1	0	0
Extra ditto	1	8	0	
Extra Superfine, a most superior coat	1	15	0	

FROCK COATS.

Capital Frock	from	1	4	0
Extra Fine	1	12	0	
Extra Super, a splendid Coat	1	19	0	

WAISTCOATS.

Roll Collar	from	0	1	9
Ditto with removable gilt studs	0	2	9	
Fashionable Buff Valencia	0	3	9	
Do. London Printed, elegant patterns	0	4	0	
Do. Scarlet Lastings	0	3	0	
Do. do. Figured Valencia and Toiletttes	0	2	6	
Splendid Persian	0	5	0	
Rich French Thibets	0	9	0	
Rich Silk Vests	0	6	0	
Do. Splendid Satin, of novel color & design	0	8	6	
Do. Rich Silk Velvet	0	12	0	
Do. do. Plush, &c.	0	13	0	
Do. Black Cloth	0	4	0	
Do. do. Cassimere	0	6	6	

TROUSERS.

Black Cloth	from	0	9	0
Any color	0	9	0	
Superior ditto	0	14	0	
Doeskin ditto	0	10	0	
Buckskin in every variety	0	9	0	
Plaid and Striped Cassimere	0	12	0	
Woollen Tweed lined to bottom	0	4	6	
A Superior article, strongly recommended	0	7	0	
Light Summer Trousers	0	4	6	

BOYS' WINTER COATS.

Taglioni	from	0	6	0
Chesterfield	0	7	0	
York Wrapper	0	10	0	

FOR MECHANICS.

(BOYS.)

Jean Jackets	from	0	2	3
Beaverteen ditto	0	2	9	
Moleskin ditto	0	3	3	
Cord ditto	0	3	6	
Cloth ditto	0	8	6	

SUITS.

Moleskin Suits	from	0	3	9
Cord ditto	0	4	0	
Geneva Twill Cord do.	0	5	6	
Do. Hussar do. Jacket, Vest and Trousers	0	9	0	

TROUSERS.

Fustian Trousers	from	0	1	3
Ditto, lined	0	2	0	
Cord ditto	0	2	9	
Fancy ditto, in endless variety	0	3	6	
Cloth ditto, lined	0	8	0	
Cloth and Figured Woollen	0	6	6	

MOURNING.

A Suit of Mourning, Coat, Vest, & Trousers	1	16	0	
Super do. do.	2	2	0	
Best do. do.	2	12	0	
Boys' do. do.	1	1	0	
Do. Superior Quality	1	6	0	

SPORTING COATS, at 8s. 12s. 15s. & 25s.

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HATS, CAPS, &c.									
Silk Hats	0	3	4		Youths' Beaver Hats	from 4s. 0d. to	0	6	9
The very best <i>Chapeau Français</i>	0	9	6		Superior Navy Caps	from	0	2	6
Men's excellent Beavers, from 4s. 6d. to ..	0	7	0		Boys' and Men's Caps	—	0	0	11
Short nap ditto, very fine, from 9s. 6d. to ..	0	11	6		Travelling Caps, of every description, from	2s. to	0	6s.	

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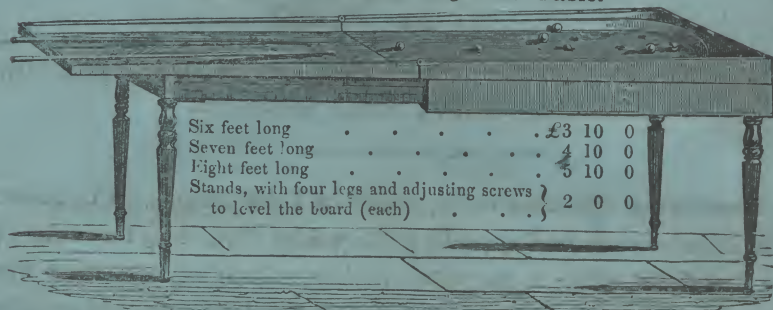
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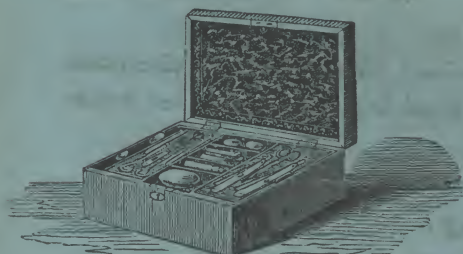
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